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ABSTRACT

The material presented in this 25-page booklet is intended to generate discussions among students, teachers, and parents about alcohol and thereby help people to focus on the way alcohol affects their lives. The format of the booklet incorporates a question-response pattern; a sample question: "You see a man who has had too much to drink getting into his car to drive off. What would you do?" Alternatives are listed to help students determine how they might react; discussions with others should then bring out other alternatives. Representative topics are "What Does Alcohol Do to a Person?" "How Much Is Too Much?" and "What You Are Drinking!" A two-page teacher's guide is included. (EL)

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People DO Drink and Drive

a guide to personal decisions

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Teacher's Guide

for

People DO Drink and Drive

The key to meaningful learning is a climate which is viewed by students as a laboratory for experimenting with ideas, feelings, and values. It must be a place where differences are expected, respected, and encouraged; where students are challenged, not threatened; and where learning is regarded as an active process. People DO Drink and Drive was designed for use in such a setting. It is intended to generate discussions among students, teachers, and parents. Reading the material and writing in the answers to the questions is one kind of learning experience--and a good one--but the reader should also be encouraged to enter rap sessions with others who have done the same. This is the experience that truly lets the light shine through.

The format of the booklet is unique and should appeal to young adults. Questions are posed, e.g., "You see a man who has had too much to drink getting into his car to drive off. What would you do?" A series of alternatives are listed to help the student determine how he or she might react. Discussions with others should then bring out other alternatives. Most of the decisions are difficult. They are difficult because there is more than one answer or resolution. They are hard, too, because of peer or social pressures.

In the classroom, small groups can be used to examine the situations. Teachers will want to use various techniques of heterogenous and homogenous grouping to enhance interaction. The purpose is to help students see varying points of view and then to consider the consequences of each before coming to personal decisions. Usually, four to eight persons per group will work best, depending on topic, physical facilities, and time.

Countless approaches and techniques can be developed for use with groups. Two examples are offered here:

Discussing both sides of the situation. For controversial topics, divide the class in half. One half is asked to think of all the reasons that could be used to support a point-of-view. The other half is asked to think of all the reasons that could be used to refute the point-of-view. Then in matched groups

- more -

of two, four, or six the students are asked to discuss the topic from their position, i.e., pro or con. After about 10-15 minutes the roles and small groups are changed. In this way the youngsters will see more than one point-of-view.

I Think, You Think. I think, you think is a group discussion technique to help students compare their perception of what they think others think, with what others really think. Since many alcohol-related decisions are based upon what a person feels others will think, it is important that he knows what others will, in fact, think.

In this process, each class member is asked to write how he or she might respond to a given situation. The students are then paired and asked to sit directly across from their paired partner. With no conversation, each is now asked to write what he feels his paired partner would do in the given situation and what it was about the partner that influenced him to write what he did. After a few minutes each person is asked to write what he thinks the other person has written about him and why he thinks that.

At the conclusion of the writing the partners share information about their response to the situation and about their perceptions of each other. This technique can also be used with students and parents. It is a fun exercise and can be very helpful in clarifying students, teachers, and parents perceptions of each other as well as to clarify different positions in alcohol-related situations.

Most of the situations included at the beginning and end of the booklet can be handled by either of the above techniques. Teachers are urged to experiment with the group process until a workable approach is found.

Teachers should keep in mind when working with groups, that both they and the students will need some time to adjust to the group process. Also it must be remembered that mistakes are not failures; they are learning experiences. As stated earlier, students must feel free to do and say what they really think without fear of recrimination.

The purpose of the booklet is to provide information and suggest situations that lead the learner to a rationale for personal decision-making. The teacher's responsibility is to provide the environment and group experiences that foster the developmental process.

What would you do in these situations?

(Place an "X" in the space to indicate which option you select in each situation)

You see a man who has had too much to drink getting into his car to drive off.

1. ☐ If the man were having trouble opening the car door, you would help him.
2. ☐ You would smile or laugh as he staggers, but you would keep walking.
3. ☐ You would shake your head in disgust but mind your own business.
4. ☐ You would approach the man and try to persuade him not to drive.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

Your friend, who doesn't want to drink because he'll be driving, is being pressured by others to have a drink.

1. ☐ You would also suggest to your friend he ought to have at least one drink to be sociable.
2. ☐ You would join the laughter but say nothing.
3. ☐ You would walk away from the group.
4. ☐ You would tell the others to lay off.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

You are invited to a party where your friends will be drinking, but, since you'll be driving, you don't want to drink.

1. ☐ You accept the beer your friend gives you and drink it.
2. ☐ You accept the beer and only pretend to drink it.
3. ☐ You accept the beer but neither drink it nor pretend to.
4. ☐ You refuse the beer and suggest a coke.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

You have been drinking a lot and you have the family car.

1. ☐ You would offer to drive your friends home.
2. ☐ You would drive only yourself home.
3. ☐ You would accept another's offer to drive you home.
4. ☐ You would ask someone else to drive you home.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

You are with your parents, who have been drinking heavily, and now it's time to drive home.

1. ☐ You would suggest that they drink up and drive you home.
2. ☐ You would laugh with them and start putting your coat on.
3. ☐ You would show disgust but say nothing.
4. ☐ You would suggest that neither your mom nor your dad drive.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

Your friend, who has driven you to a party, is about to have one last drink "for the road."

1. ☐ You pour yourself "one for the road" and drink with him.
2. ☐ You wait until he finishes his drink, but you say nothing.
3. ☐ You would prefer that he not drink, but you say nothing.
4. ☐ You would ask him not to have the drink.
5. ☐ Other (explain).

_____

What are the advantages and disadvantages of various alternatives in each case?

_____

What Might Your Responses Mean?

Determine which option (#1, #2, #3, #4, or #5) you chose most often. Use the guidelines below to interpret your responses.

Responded 3 or more times to #1

You appear to actively approve of drinking and driving and also of influencing people in that direction.

Responded 3 or more times to #2

You appear to passively support drinking and driving and influencing people to drink more than they want. You do not, however, get actively involved in these decisions you approve of.

Responded 3 or more times to #3

You appear to disapprove of drinking and driving, but to approve of people making their own decisions. You do not get actively involved in carrying out your feelings.

Responded 3 or more times to #4

You appear to actively disapprove of drinking and driving, but to approve of people making their own decisions about drinking. You are willing to take action based on these feelings.

Situations like those explored here are just a few of those in which each of us may be involved. Your decisions in these drinking situations make a difference to others as well as to yourself. Most people will drink some alcoholic beverages in their lifetimes, and even those who choose not to drink will be faced with alcohol-related decisions. We ought to have some dependable information to help us make these decisions.

If you did not have at least 3 responses of the same number to the six situations above, you have not yet made a decision about your feelings on drinking, driving, and influencing others. You are ambivalent! Now don't get upset. You just need more information or more time to think these things through. That's why you have this booklet.

What Does Alcohol Do To a Person?

Alcohol is a *drug* which depresses the central nervous system. As a *depressant*, alcohol acts like an anesthetic, slowing the activity of the brain and the spinal cord. The drinker experiences the depressant action of the alcohol in reduced tension and lowering of his inhibitions. These feelings can frequently be observed in the drinker as he becomes more active, talkative, and loud and as he begins to do and say things that are not a part of his normal behavior pattern. Even though these feelings come from the slowing down effects (depressant) of the alcohol, they are referred to as "getting high." If

enough alcohol is consumed, drowsiness, and eventually, sleep will result.

Since eating before and while drinking slows down the effect of alcohol on the body, what would you suggest for the person who plans to drink or serve alcohol?

Unlike most food, alcohol does not have to be digested. Once it is swallowed, alcohol is absorbed directly into the blood stream through the walls of the stomach and small intestine. This absorption process may be slowed, however, if there is food in the stomach.

As the amount of alcohol in the blood increases, several things happen to the body: vision becomes impaired, depth perception becomes distorted, and the pupils of the eyes react more slowly to variations in light. Also, coordination deteriorates, the ability to solve problems is reduced, and the ability to recall past events or learned knowledge is diminished. The mind simply can't manage to put it all together, and, as a result, the person may exhibit poor judgment.

How would you respond to the people who suggest cold showers, coffee, or exercise as a means of getting rid of the effects of alcohol?

Fortunately, the effects of alcohol are temporary for the moderate drinker. Very small quantities of alcohol are eliminated through sweat, breath, and urine. The body disposes of most alcohol, however, through oxidation (burning) in the liver. The oxidation takes place at a constant rate and nothing can be done to slow down or accelerate the process. It continues until all of the alcohol has been burned. In other words *only time* will "sober him up."

How Much is Too Much?

The attitude of those who do not drink might be that any amount of alcohol is too much. For those who do drink, a definition of too much alcohol varies from one person or group to the next, and from one drinking occasion to the next.

Most people who drink, drink responsibly. They usually have just one or two drinks and they drink slowly enough to avoid the adverse effects of alcohol. In other words, they are "in control" at all times.

All fifty states, in order to help enforce their laws against driving while under the influence of alcohol, have legal definitions of what is too much alcohol. These definitions, however, are not exactly the same from state to state. Most states base their definitions on a person's blood-alcohol concentration (BAC), which may also be referred to as blood-alcohol level (BAL). The BAC is a measure of the amount of alcohol in a person's blood. It can be determined by testing a person's blood, breath, urine, or saliva. Testing the breath is the quickest, least complicated, and most frequently used test to determine BAC.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration has recommended that, for driving, every state adopt a BAC of .10 percent as the level of intoxication. The blood of an individual with a .10 percent BAC is 1/10 of 1 percent alcohol. This may not sound like very much alcohol until you consider the fact that some people pass out before they reach that level. A BAC of .50 percent or 1/2 of 1 percent alcohol in the blood may be lethal. It could depress the body functions to the point at which they stop and the person would die.

Most states have adopted the recommended .10 percent BAC, or lower, as their level for determining intoxication. The others—Maryland, Mississippi, New Jersey, Wisconsin and Wyoming—have established their level of intoxication at .15 percent BAC.

What are your state's laws regarding drinking and driving, and what is the BAC level for determining intoxication?

Three factors influence a person's BAC: (1) the amount of alcohol consumed; (2) the period of time over which the alcohol was consumed; and (3) the person's body weight. As a general rule, each drink (one ounce of "hard liquor", one 12-ounce bottle of beer, or one 4-ounce glass of wine) will raise the BAC of an average-weight person (160 lb.) by .02 percent. For lighter persons, the BAC will increase more per drink; for heavier persons, the BAC will increase less per drink. Thus, the 100 pound cheerleader would have difficulty "keeping up" with a 220 pound left tackle. This can be demonstrated by taking a pint jar and a quart jar of water and pouring an ounce of some colored substance into each. The concentration will obviously be much stronger in the smaller jar. This is the same principle involved in the use of alcoholic beverages. If the cheerleader and the tackle each take three beers, it will be concentrated much more heavily in the cheerleader.

The period of time over which alcohol is consumed is an important influence on the BAC since alcohol is oxidized at a rate of approximately .02 percent BAC per hour. In other words, the body gets rid of about one drink per hour. A general formula for determining the BAC of a person would be to multiply the number of drinks minus the number of hours by .02. Thus, BAC = (number of drinks − number of hours) (.02).

For example, consider the case of a young man who has had three drinks in one hour. Using the formula above, his BAC would be (3 drinks - 1 hour) (.02) = (2) (.02) = .04 percent BAC.

What would be the approximate BAC for an average weight person who has had two drinks in one hour?

_____percent BAC

What would be the approximate BAC for a person who has had two drinks in two hours?

_____percent BAC

If a person wanted to maintain a BAC close to .00–and thus, avoid the impairment effects of alcohol–about how many drinks could he safely consume in a three-hour period?

_____drinks (number of)

What is the only way to prevent ever reaching a BAC above .00?

How much is too much? If your BAC is above .05 percent, you may have drunk enough to be too impaired to drive an automobile safely; and if your BAC is above .10 percent (or .15 in 5 states), as mentioned above, you may be convicted of operating while intoxicated. But these are legal definitions of how much, and may vary from your personal definition of how much is too much for *you*.

_____

How many drinks could YOU consume in one hour and keep your BAC below .05? .10?

_____

There is more to determining the effects of alcohol (impairment) on a person than just determining the amount of alcohol he has consumed. Consider the following and determine which person might be more impaired after drinking:

- (a) The person who drinks nearly every day, and who has just had three beers, or (b) the young beginning drinker who has had only one or two beers in his lifetime, who has just had three beers.

  Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

- (a) The girl who has had plenty of rest and has just had two cocktails, or (b) the young girl who has only had six hours of sleep in two days, followed by two cocktails.

  Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

- (a) The guy who is depressed after having just lost his girlfriend and who drinks four beers, or (b) his friend who feels great, and then drinks four beers.

Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

- (a) The girl who has just taken two cold pills and then drinks one beer, or (b) the girl who feels great and has one beer.

Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

- (a) The person who wants to get "high" or (b) the person who doesn't want to get "high" after drinking the same amount of alcoholic beverage.

Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

- (a) The person who is excited and happy or (b) the person who just feels normal after drinking the same amount of alcohol.

Circle one, a b

What reasons can you give to support your response?

What factors in addition to the amount of alcohol should a person consider in determining "how much is too much?"

What You Are Drinking!

There are many kinds of alcohol but only one, ethyl alcohol, can be used by humans. Other alcohols, when taken internally, can make one violently ill or even permanently blind.

The alcoholic content of beverages varies widely, and is often stated in terms of proof. Pure alcohol would be 100 percent alcohol, or 200 proof. A 100 proof liquor would have 50 percent alcohol. Thus, the proof value of an alcoholic beverage is obtained by doubling the percentage of alcohol in the beverage.

Most whiskies state their alcoholic content in terms of proof. For example, 86 proof is 43 percent alcohol. The alcoholic content of beer is expressed as a percentage—generally 6 percent (or 12 proof). For wine, the alcoholic content is generally stated in percent, which is usually 12 percent (24 proof). You might want to check various bottles

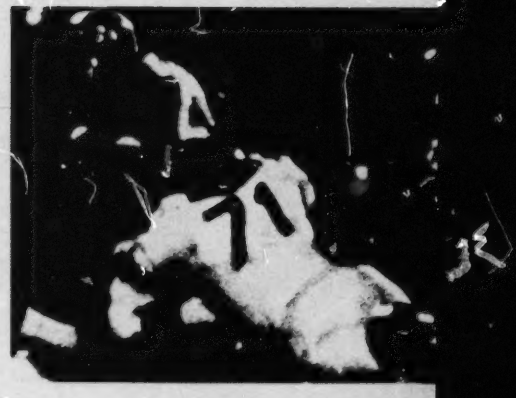
of alcoholic beverages to determine the proof and percent of alcohol they contain.

In their early drinking experiences, young people frequently select beer or one of the modern, popular wines. From the standpoint of alcoholic content, some interesting comparisons might be made. For example, how does a serving of beer or of wine compare with a shot of whiskey?

	Amount Beverage	*Percentage/Alcohol*	*Amount/Alcohol*
Beer	12 ounces	5%	.60 ounces
Wine	5 ounces	12%	.60 ounces
Whiskey	1.5 ounces	40%	.60 ounces

It is also important to keep in mind that not all drinks have equal amounts of alcohol. The alcoholic content of any one drink depends upon both the type and amount of liquor it contains. Some drinks, such as manhattans, and martinis, contain three ounces of liquor. Some mixed drinks contain only one ounce of liquor. Whether a drink is strong or weak depends on the amount of alcohol in it.

Check a drink recipe book to determine the amount of alcohol in a martini, manhattan, old-fashioned, daiquiri, and highball as well as other drinks you have heard about.



What is Abusive Use of Alcohol?

There are two general classes of abusive users of alcohol. First is the person who abuses alcohol on occasion. This is the person who gets intoxicated (loses control of himself) once in a while, but who generally drinks responsibly. The second class of abusive drinkers includes those who are unable to control their drinking. They can't help drinking—even against their better judgment. These persons have symptoms of the disease called *alcoholism*.

The consequences of abusive use of alcohol—whether by an alcoholic or by an occasionally abusive drinker—can be disastrous. Over half of all traffic deaths occur in crashes in which a drinking driver is involved, reports the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. Less often commented on are the tragic effects that abusive

drinking can have on the drinker's health, ability to perform on the job, and personal relationships.

For the individual who occasionally drinks too much, avoiding abusive use of alcohol will demand a greater awareness of himself and the effects of alcohol. It will mean developing awareness of his emotional feelings, and finding ways to cope with problems. It will mean thinking about the drinking he is doing, keeping himself well informed, and using previous experience with drinking to help him understand how much is too much.

For the alcoholic, there seems to be only one answer to his drinking problem—total abstention. This is more difficult to achieve than it may sound, for the alcoholic has become dependent upon alcohol. It is a way of life for him. The alcoholic needs help and understanding from others, and even more importantly, the confidence that he can arrest his illness. Alcoholics Anonymous (A.A.) is an international organization of recovering alcoholics who endeavor to help other alcoholics. Another organization, Alateen, is made up of young people who seek help with family problems that arise when alcoholism affects a parent.

In addition to the school counselor, minister, doctor, or Alateen, where could you get help for yourself or another who has an alcohol problem?

What will you do?

If you are like most people, you want to do your own thing. In fact, you *do* your own thing! Oh, you may be persuaded—but only if you let yourself be persuaded, right? Sometimes that's good; other times it's not so good. In any case, you will have to make decisions and your decisions *will* make a difference.

Consider the situations which are presented on the following pages, and think about how you would decide in each case. (Write your answers in the spaces provided.)

SITUATION I
Minding Your Own Business vs. Helping Those in Need

Some say that people are basically selfish, that if you don't watch out for yourself, no one else will. The key to success, they say, is to "mind your own business."

Others say that people need to stick together and help one another, that should "help those in need."

What would you do in each of the following situations? Think about your responses then discuss them with others.

- You are at a party where someone is very drunk and sick.
- You are with some friends. One of them has had too much to drink to drive safely, but he is planning to drive home anyway.
- You are with a group of persons with whom you would like to be friends. Two of the boys try to persuade another to take some liquor from his parents' cabinet supply.
- One of your friends seems to be drinking more and more. Every time you see him he has had something to drink.
- Some of your friends suggest "spiking" the cokes of the non-drinkers at a party.

How would you summarize your position regarding the issue, "Minding Your Own Business" vs "Helping Those in Need"?

SITUATION II
Peer Pressure

Tom is at a party where some of his friends are drinking alcoholic beverages. He doesn't care to so he opens a coke. They coax him to have just one drink. He refuses, saying, "I just don't want to drink. I don't have anything against it—I just don't want to."

The other fellows continue to nag him about drinking. Finally, in desperation, Tom says, "Okay, just one."

- What do you think of what Tom did?

- What is your opinion of Tom's friends?

- If you were Tom, what would you have done?

- If you were one of Tom's friends, would you have acted differently?

SITUATION III
Being Different

Ollie and three friends are shooting baskets at the playground when a number of their friends drive up and ask if they're interested in a party where there will be plenty of beer and some cute girls.

Ollie says, "Thanks, no!"

After the others encourage Ollie to come along, Ollie says, "You go if you want to, but I'm not going."

- What do you think of Ollie?

- Why do you suppose he didn't want to go?

- What effect might Ollie's decision have had on the others he was playing basketball with?

SITUATION IV
What Would Your Parents Say?

Ron has just arrived at Sue's house to pick her up for a beer party they plan to attend. Sue greets Ron at the door and says in a quiet

voice, "What will you say when my parents ask you where we're going?"

"Well, if I tell them the truth," Ron replies, "they probably won't let you go. If I lie and they find out, we're really in trouble."

Sue suggests, "We could tell them we're going to a party, but not say anything about the beer."

- What difference will it make what they tell Sue's parents?

- What would you say if you were Ron? If you were Sue?

- How would your parents react to your answers? (Predict their reactions; then ask them.)

SITUATION V
He's Had Too Much

Greg and Sheila have been at a party since eight o'clock. He has consumed several beers but Sheila hasn't drunk at all. It is now midnight and time for Sheila to go home.

Since Greg has had close to ten beers and is feeling pretty "high," Sheila suggests that she drive home. Another boy comments to Greg that this might be a good idea. Greg replies, "I've had more than this lots of times, and I've always made it home. I'm okay for driving."

- What is your opinion of Greg?

- If you were Sheila, what would you do?

- If you were the other boy what would you do?

SITUATION VI
Do Others Really Think What You Think They Think?

Jeff, the driver, and three friends are parked in the country, where one of the friends has stashed a case of beer.

Jeff figures he probably shouldn't drink, since he is driving, but he is afraid his friends will cut him down if he doesn't drink with them. So he asks for a beer.

Meanwhile, at least one of Jeff's friends is concerned that Jeff is drinking, but he, too, is afraid to say anything about it.

- How could this type of situation be prevented?

- Do people always mean what they say?

- What are your reactions to this situation?

SITUATION VII
Deciding for Others

Sally, who sometimes drinks, has decided not to drink tonight. Her date for the party, Gene, is disappointed in her decision, and asks if anything is wrong. Sally responds, "Nothing. I just don't feel much like drinking tonight."

Gene gets Sally a soft drink. They do some dancing and he offers to get her another. While he is pouring her drink this time, he adds some vodka, and tells others that Sally will never know the difference.

- What is your opinion of Gene's actions?

- If you were one of the others, what, if anything, would you do?

- If you were Sally and you found out about the vodka how would you probably react?

SITUATION VIII
Influencing Others

You and your younger brother have accompanied your parents to visit some friends. During the three or four hours you have been visiting, your parents have been drinking steadily.

It is nearing time for your family to leave. You and your brother have the following conversation.

You: Man, have they had a lot to drink! This place looks like a liquor store with all these bottles all over the place.

Brother: From the way they sound, you know they've had a lot!

You: I think I should drive home.

Brother: They'll never let you.

You: I know I'm not a very experienced driver, but I sure would feel safer with me driving than with either of them behind the wheel.

Brother: They're not exactly falling down drunk, you know.

You: True. But alcohol affects your ability to drive even before you get bombed.

Brother: Okay. But you'd better come up with some pretty good arguments. Got any suggestions?

_____

Write your response to your brother's final question.

_____

SITUATION IX
A Friend

It is past midnight when you get a phone call from a friend. She says she is drunk and needs a ride home. It is obvious from the way she sounds that she has had too much to drink.

Several thoughts run through your mind. Should you tell your parents? Isn't there someone there who could take her home? Is she really *that* bad off?

- What would you do?

- What do you think of the girl who called?

- How might the friend react if you refused?

- How would you describe the meaning of "friend"?

- How would your parents react to your friend's request? (Write your answer then ask them.)

IF, through your thoughts and discussions, you've come to recognize the complexity of the alcohol/driving problem.

IF you see that it's sometimes hard to decide on a simple yes, no position

IF you recognize that what you do influences others—and vice versa

IF you recognize legal, moral, personal, and social implications regarding drinking and driving

IF you understand the physiological and psychological aspects of alcohol consumption

IF you are prepared to exercise your judgment with due regard to the foregoing

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THEN, you can feel secure that you are better prepared to make decisions regarding alcohol and driving than are most citizens. Armed with this background, you may wish to help others to prepare themselves to make more realistic judgments.